

How to Access Surveyor's Notes from Original Surveys in Livingston County

By: Dale C. Maley

Last Updated: 05-08-2024

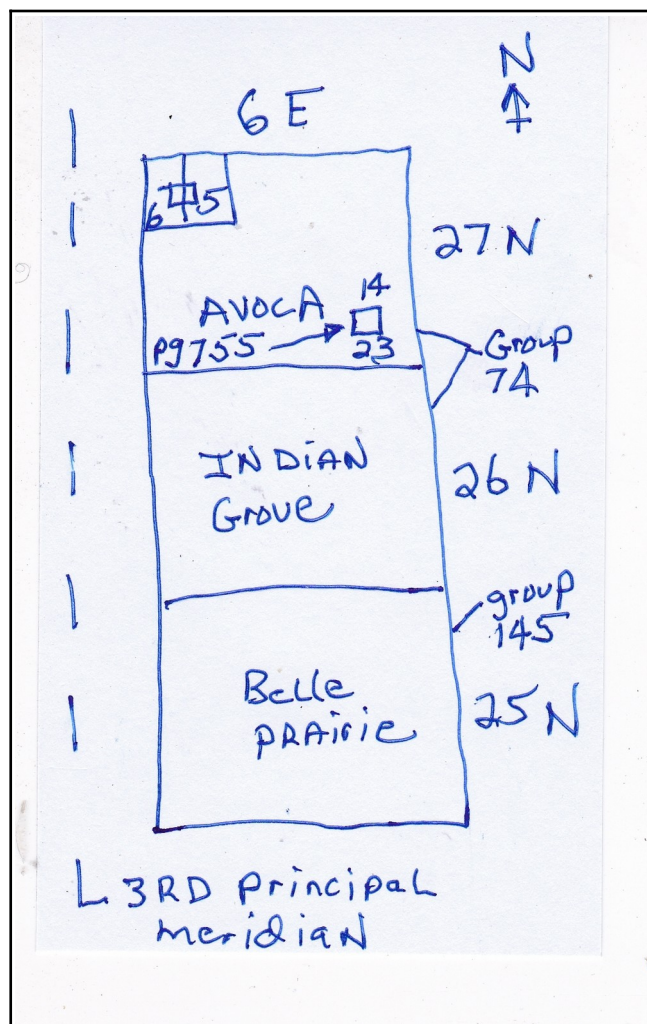
This is not an easy thing to do !! I had to get email help from a lady at the National Archives to do it.

The original survey maps of townships is relatively easy to find on the Internet. I have downloaded copies of the 3 Fairbury area townships in Livingston County (Avoca, Indian Grove, and Belle Prairie).

There are no legends on these maps.

For example, on the original survey map of Avoca township, there are 2 rectangular shaped symbols. One is up my McDowell in the northwest corner of the township, in sections 5 and 6. A larger similar symbol is around the Avoca Cemetery in sections 14 and 23. These 2 unknown rectangles are shown on my illustration below.

My Illustration



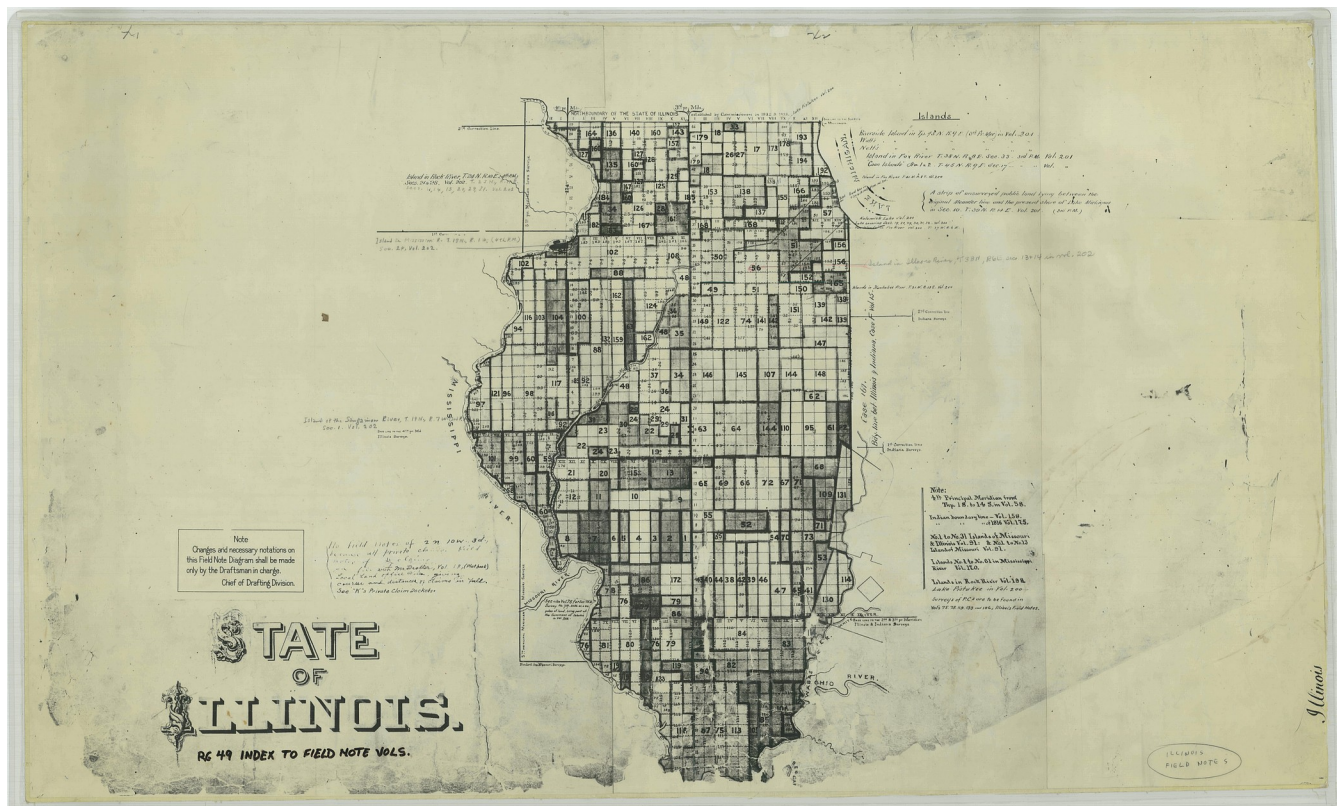
I recently learned that some of the original surveyor's notes are available online, if they have been scanned in.

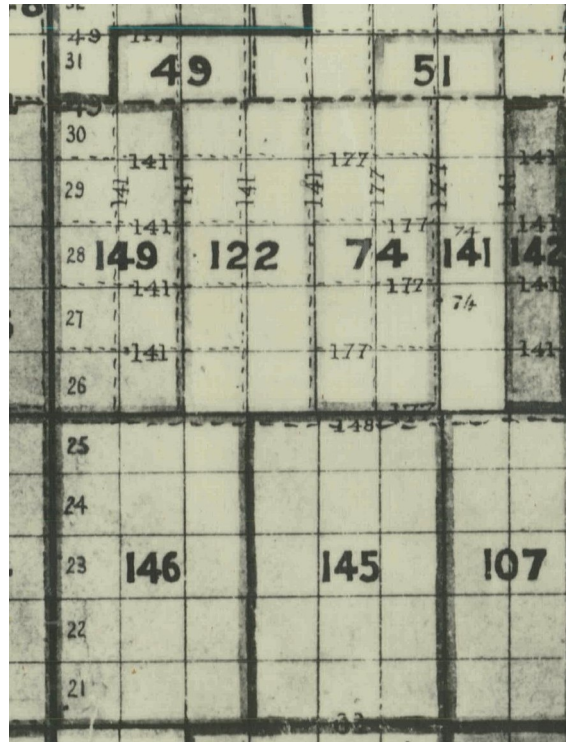
Which "District" the Township is in

You need to [use this map.](#)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/66799141>

Below is a low resolution copy of this key map you need.





The vertical heavy line on the LH side is the 3rd Principal Meridian. To the right of it, in a vertical column, are the North designations. Not shown on this portion, but shown on the top of the whole map, is the East numbers. Since we are looking for 30N 06E, we can count 6 blocks to the right of the 3rd principal meridian, for Avoca Township.

So the original surveyor's notes for Avoca and Indian Grove townships are in District number 74, and Belle Prairie is in District 145. NOTE: District might be the wrong nomenclature.

Web Site with the Surveyor's Notes

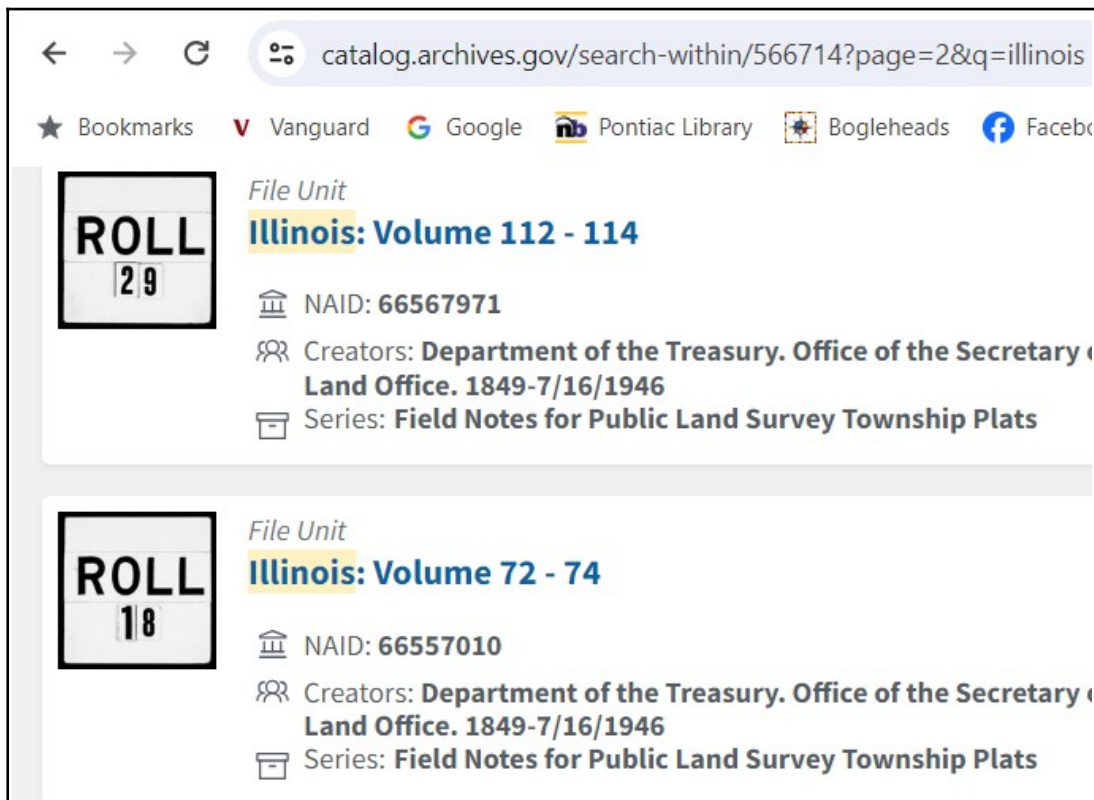
So we are looking for district 74 and 145.

[Go to this web site and search for Illinois.](#)

<https://catalog.archives.gov/search-within/566714?q=illinois>

Now you have to scroll down until you find district 74.

It is Volume 72-74 as shown below. Click on that one to get district 74.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying catalog.archives.gov/search-within/566714?page=2&q=illinois. The browser's bookmark bar includes links to Vanguard, Google, Pontiac Library, Bogleheads, and Facebook. The search results are displayed in two rows. The first row shows a thumbnail labeled 'ROLL 29' next to the text 'File Unit Illinois: Volume 112 - 114'. Below this, it lists 'NAID: 66567971', 'Creators: Department of the Treasury. Office of the Secretary of the Interior. Land Office. 1849-7/16/1946', and 'Series: Field Notes for Public Land Survey Township Plats'. The second row shows a thumbnail labeled 'ROLL 18' next to the text 'File Unit Illinois: Volume 72 - 74'. Below this, it lists 'NAID: 66557010', 'Creators: Department of the Treasury. Office of the Secretary of the Interior. Land Office. 1849-7/16/1946', and 'Series: Field Notes for Public Land Survey Township Plats'.

Thumbnail	File Unit	NAID	Creators	Series
ROLL 29	Illinois: Volume 112 - 114	66567971	Department of the Treasury. Office of the Secretary of the Interior. Land Office. 1849-7/16/1946	Field Notes for Public Land Survey Township Plats
ROLL 18	Illinois: Volume 72 - 74	66557010	Department of the Treasury. Office of the Secretary of the Interior. Land Office. 1849-7/16/1946	Field Notes for Public Land Survey Township Plats

The Internet address for Volume 72-74 is:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/66557010>

So you get to the web site, and WOW, there are 938 pages !!!!!!!!!!!

I don't know of any way to quickly search and find number 74 and Avoca Township.

There is a cover page for volume 72, 73, and 74. I just kept scrolling down the pages until I found the volume 74 cover page.

Then I started sampling pages to see if I could find 27N 06E for Avoca Township. I found it around page 750.

I wish I knew the order they surveyed it, so I could mentally link that to the notes, but I have not figure that out yet.

The two weird rectangular symbols were in Avoca township in sections 5, 6 and sections 14, 23. I kept sampling the pages until I found a reference to sections 14, 23, on page 755. The surveyor made an entry when he entered the corn field and left the corn field. This verifies the rectangular plot was an existing corn field!

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East	Along the line already surveyed between sections 14 & 23 Township 27 North Range 6 East of the
Chain	3 ^d Principal Meridian
09.75	Entered prairie
26.25	Entered cornfield
39.88±	Raised a mound in which set a post for Quarter section corner 252 links East of the old corner by me made for two Quarter sections: destroyed said old corner & run over the post this half mile level good land fit for cultivation timber on the west end oak elm hickory & sugar tree undergrowth the same
46.25	Left the cornfield bearing North & South
79.71	Came to sections 13, 14, 23 & 24 Township 27 North Range 6 East this half mile level good prairie fit for cultivation
North	Between sections 14 & 15 Township 27 North Range
Chain	6 East of the 3 ^d Principal Meridian on a survey
40.00	Set a post for Quarter section corner from which

Can I find Rectangular Plot in Avoca township near McDowell in sections 5 and 6?





















Found it on page 744!!

North	Between sections 5 & 6 Township 27 North Range
Chains	6 East of the 3 ^d Principal Meridian
05.00	Entire prairie
11.25	Entire a corn field about 60 acres
40.00	Raised a mound in which set a post for quarter section corner this half mile level good prairie
	fit for cultivation
45.00	Left the field
46.50	Entire timber

Surveyor said it was a corn field of about 60 acres. Wonder who the farmer was in 1833, if the year is correct? Very few settlers in the whole county in 1833.

Guess I could check the bureau of land management database and see who bought sections 5 and 6 from government?

<https://glorerecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx#searchByTypeIndex=0&searchTabIndex=0>

Image	Accession	Names ↑	Date	Doc #	State	Meridian	Twp - Rng	Aliquots	Sec. #	County
	IL3700 .275	 HUBBARD, WILLIAM G,  HUBBARD, BENJAMIN P	11/10/1840	8563	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½SW¼	5	Livingston
	MW-1077-302	 JOHNSON, BENJAMIN,  HART, HENRY	9/1/1851	38778	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½NW¼, Lot/Trct 1	4	Livingston
							027N - 006E	W½NW¼, Lot/Trct 2	4	Livingston
							027N - 006E	E½NE¼, Lot/Trct 1	5	Livingston
							027N - 006E	E½NE¼, Lot/Trct 2	5	Livingston
	MW-1077-289	 PATTY, MERCER B,  GOWAN, SAMUEL R	8/1/1851	18251	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	E½NW¼, Lot/Trct 2	5	Livingston
							028N - 006E	SE¼SW¼	32	Livingston
							028N - 006E	S½SE¼	32	Livingston
	IL3760 .388	 PATTY, MERCER B	10/1/1852	11587	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½NE¼, Lot/Trct 2	5	Livingston
	MW-0632-131	 PATTY, MERCER P,  WHITMORE, GEORGE	9/1/1852	12073	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½NE¼, Lot/Trct 1	5	Livingston
	IL3700 .327	 WEED, EZRA F	11/10/1840	8615	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½NW¼, Lot/Trct 2	5	Livingston
	IL3700 .269	 WEED, JAMES	11/10/1840	8557	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	NW¼, Lot/Trct 1	5	Livingston
	IL3700 .271	 WEED, JAMES	11/10/1840	8559	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½SE¼	5	Livingston
							027N - 006E	E½SW¼	5	Livingston

[illegible]

William and Benjamin Hubbard in 1840, when they bought it.

Eighty-one votes were given for and fifty-six votes against removing county seat. Seventy-eight votes were given for removing to the location offered by Rockwood, Hubbard and Weed, at a point about four or five miles up the river from Pontiac, where fifty acres of land were offered; the bond for the donation having been approved by the court.

This vote was taken by virtue of an act passed March 1, 1839, directing a vote to be taken at the August election, for and against re-locating the county seat, by which it was provided that, if two-thirds of all the votes cast were for removal, and a majority were for removal to any place named, then the county seat should be removed. It lacked a few votes of the required two-thirds, though a majority favored Rockwood's.

On the 3d day of December, 1839, the County Commissioners entered into a contract with the proprietor of the town for the erection of a Court House, to be 22x30 feet, two stories high; to be built and completed within twelve months after "there is sufficient rise in the Vermilion River to allow the proprietors of the saw-mill to put said mill in operation." When completed, the Commissioners were to cancel and deliver up the bond which had been given for the location of the county seat.

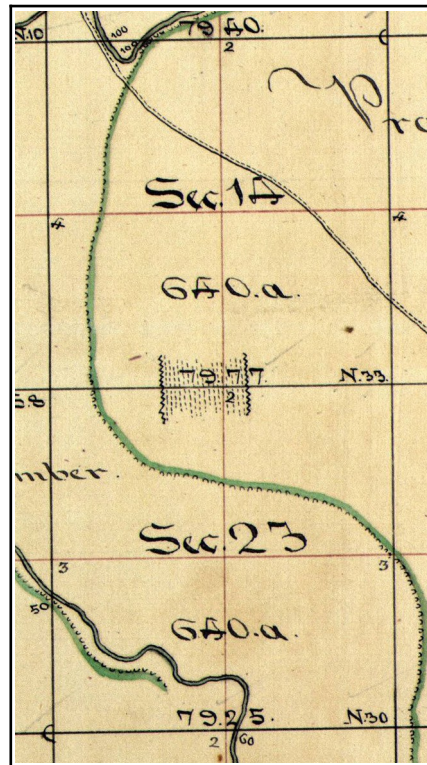
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Did a McDowell buy the land with the cornfield in sections 14 and 23?



Looks like the SE quarter of the SW quarter of section 14.

Image	Accession	Names ↑	Date	Doc #	State	Meridian	Twp - Rng	Aliquots	Sec. #	County
	IL3700 .287	BALL, RICHARD L	11/10/1840	8575	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½NW¼	14	Livingston
	IL3700 .299	HEFNER, NICHOLAS	11/10/1840	8587	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	W½SE¼	14	Livingston
	MW-0864-500	LANE, ALFRED, WOODSON, LATTON	3/1/1855	76657	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	NE¼NE¼	14	Livingston
	IL3730 .296	MCDOWELL, HIRAM M	11/1/1849	9814	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	SE¼SE¼	14	Livingston
	MW-0755-326	MCDOWELL, SARAH, MCDOWELL, WILLIAM	3/1/1854	73465	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	SE¼NW¼	14	Livingston
	IL3700 .199	MCDOWELL, SARAH, HEFNER, NICHOLAS	11/10/1840	8480	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	SW¼	14	Livingston
	IL3760 .329	TITUS, DAVID	10/1/1852	11518	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	SW¼NE¼	14	Livingston
	IL3750 .299	TITUS, JESSE	12/2/1850	10887	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	NE¼SE¼	14	Livingston
	IL3760 .227	TITUS, JESSE	9/1/1852	11393	IL	3rd PM	027N - 006E	SE¼NE¼	14	Livingston

Sarah McDowell bought the whole SW ¼ of section 14 in 1840. It was a cash sale, not a military patent case.

More Research Required for Indian Grove and Belle Prairie Townships

Indian Grove is in volume 74 like Avoca Township, so the original Surveyor's notes are available online.

Belle Prairie Township is on volume 145 and it is also available.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/66576612>

Chatsworth, including Oliver's Grove, is 26N 08E, and is volume 142. Volumes 139-142 are available online at:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/66575656>

My Chatsworth friends may want to investigate these surveyor's notes.